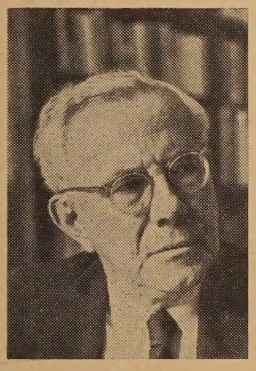
The Pulpit

A Journal of Contemporary Preaching



Paul Tillich:

God's Pursuit of Man

Frederick W. Schroeder • Model Mind for Modern Men

Martin E. Marty • Cause and Credentials

David Noel Freedman • Great Expectations

William F. Keucher • When Success Is Failure

John S. Wood • Being "All Shook Up"

John Loose • "The Christ Business"

LEE C. MOOREHEAD • HOW FREE IS THE PULPIT?

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The Pulpit

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Beg Pardon!

THE Pulpit in February 1959 published a sermon, "Hiding from God," by Robert J. McCracken, minister of Riverside Church, New York. Because of an error in correspondence, we did not know that the sermon had been published by the *Pulpit Digest* in September 1958. We have apologized to *Pulpit Digest* for publication of this sermon without credit to them and have, we hope, explained the error and our regret for it to the satisfaction of Dr. McCracken. It is not often that two papers have the opportunity to test their judgment against each other in this way, but in this instance both agreed that "Hiding from God" is an excellent sermon.

HAROLD E. FEY

The Pulpit

A Journal of Contemporary Preaching

VOLUME XXX APRIL 1959 No. 4

Memo:

The King James' "*suffer* the little children to come unto me" is no doubt less precise nowadays than the Revised Standard "*let* the children come to me." But suffer me to say unto you that there were secondary precisions in that "suffer" that "let" will never let through. For there is just no ducking the fact that there is a real sense in which childhood has to be suffered and not just entertained.

Now let the grandmothers in the readership have at me. "What, those downy-headed, bright-eyed, pink-cheeked, high-spirited darlings have to be *suffered?* How could you be so obtuse, so stony-hearted, so unresponsive!"

But wait a minute now. I know as well as anyone just how bright-eyed and high-spirited the cherubs are, and I respond to all that in just as much of a glow as anybody else does. But I know, too, what some may have forgotten, which is just how discouraging those same bright eyes and high spirits can be at six o'clock in the morning when they are ready to begin the day and when your day is therefore begun whether you are ready or not. Then it is not their simplicity or their sweetness or their sincerity that charms as it is their impatience and their intemperance and their irreverence that moves us.

Who is to say that it is only the obvious childish virtues that Jesus enjoined upon us when he boosted the boys and girls who got to him? Why not the kids' nuisance value too? He had just seen the youngsters giving the disciples a hard time. Were not the children's impatience, intemperance, irreverence commended quite as much as the gentler, sweeter virtues? Surely church and society need the rambunctious characteristics most right now.

Impatience, for instance. No one who has recently gone through a wheedle wheedle nag nag hurry hurry day with a child needs to have it proven to him that impatience is part of the youth's complement. And it ought to be just as unnecessary to point out that something like this childish impatience is necessary in the Christian life.

Everything is waiting to be done: the wounds in the body of Christ are to be healed, a church is to be reunited, a society saved, a culture redeemed. New truths have to be discovered, new beauty created, new justice established. The materials are all at hand. There is a general will to proceed. But it is still mostly waiting to be done. We are too calm, too cool, too collected. We must learn "the grace of impatience."

The same goes for intemperance. If there is anything that children *aren't,* it is temperate. Always they are at least a little, usually a lot ahead of what is reasonable or possible. Can you imagine ever having to urge a boy closer to the edge of Grand Canyon for a better look down? Can you imagine ever having to beg a girl to try a little lipstick for the first time? Always they are there before you, and a little farther out.

And so it must be, in another way, with us. The measured, temperate life will never do the Kingdom's job that is waiting to be done. We have to throw ourselves into the healing, restoring, redeeming work to be done for and with peoples and institutions. We cannot calculate and compromise and go just so far and not another step further. We've got to take the risk, accept the gamble. We've got to throw ourselves in as did the Christ whose intemperance led to the cross — as did one of us whose intemperance cried, "Not my feet only, Lord, but my head and my hands."

And then there was that healthy irreverence which the disciples plainly feared most in the children clustered around Jesus. Kids, even when they respect, rarely venerate adults. Which may have just suited Jesus. There are well-known signs that he worried about being worshiped. He seems to have foreseen the many who think that if we approach him on our knees somehow we can get around him without his noticing that we haven't really pitched in anywhere. No wonder Jesus might prefer a clear-eyed child's irreverence. He would no doubt suffer that in anyone, if it meant that person's confronting him directly, listening to him straight, going out to do his practical, material will in the world without first spiritualizing and prettying the mandate out of all recognition.

Impatience, intemperance, irreverence — these we suffer in children; equivalents to these we'd better cultivate in our own lives. On them depend a Christian's nuisance value.

T. A. G.

The Flight from God Starts
In the Moment We Feel His Presence

God's Pursuit of Man

By Paul Tillich

Then all the disciples forsook him and fled. Matthew 26:56, Luke 14:16-24.

LISTENING one evening to the records of Bach's "Passion According to St. Matthew," I was struck by the text of the line, "Then all the disciples forsook him and fled." It anticipates the words of Jesus on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" He who is forsaken by all men feels forsaken by God. And indeed, all men left him, and those who were nearest him fled farthest away from him. Ordinarily we are not aware of this fact. We are used to imagining the crucifixion in terms of those beautiful pictures in which, along with his mother and other women, at least one disciple is present. The reality was different. They all fled and some women dared to watch only from afar. Only an unimaginable loneliness was left in the hours in which his life and his work were broken.

What shall we think about the disciples? Our first reaction probably is the question: How could they forsake him whom they had called the Messiah, the Christ, the bringer of the new age of the world, whom they had followed after leaving everything for his sake? But my reaction was different when I heard the words and tones of the record — I admired the disciples! For it is *they* to whom we owe the words of our text. They did not hide their flight; they simply stated it in one short sentence, a statement by which they are judged for all times. The Gospel stories bring many judgments against the disciples. We hear that they misunderstood him continuously, as did his mother and his brothers, and that their misunderstanding increased daily his passion. We read that some of the most im portant among them demanded a place of exce tional glory and power in the world to come. W hear that Jesus reproached them because the zeal made them fanatical against those who di not follow him. And in the reports, whose la source is Peter himself, we read that Jesus had t call him Satan because Peter tried to dissuade hi from going to Jerusalem to his death; and we rea in the same reports that Peter denied his discipl ship in the hour of trial. These reports are aston ishing; they show what Jesus did to the disciple He taught them to accept judgment and not t present themselves in a favorable light. Withou accepting such judgment, they could not have bee his disciples; and our Gospels would not be wha they are if the disciples had suppressed the truti about their own profound weakness. The glor of the Christ and the misery of his followers woul not be manifest in them as it is now. And yet ever in the same records, man's desire to cover up hi own ugliness makes itself felt. Later traditions i our Gospels try to smooth the hard and hurtin edges of the original picture. One could not bea within the established congregations the fact tha *all* the disciples fled, that none of them witnesse the crucifixion and the death of the master. On could not accept the fact that only far away i Galilee was their flight arrested by the appearanc of him whom they deserted in his hour of agony and despair. So, later on it was stated that Jesus himself had told them to go to Galilee; their flight was not a real flight; and still later it was said that they did not flee at all but remained in Jerusalem. From earliest times on the church could not stand the judgment against itself, its past and its present. It tries to hide what the disciples openly admitted — that we all forsook him and fled. But this is the truth about all men including the followers of Jesus today.

II

The flight from God starts in the moment we feel his presence. Such feeling can work in the

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PAUL TILLICH *is university professor at Harvard and a member of the Divinity School faculty. After holding teaching positions in philosophy and theology in many of the leading German universities, he was forced to leave Germany upon the rise of Hitler and 1933 came to this country at the invitation of Union Theological Seminary, New York, where he taught until 1955. Dr. Tillich is well-known as a theologian, philosopher, author and lecturer. This sermon is reprinted from the April 1958 issue of* The Alumni Bulletin *of Bangor Theological Seminary.*

ark, half-conscious regions of our being, unrecognized but effective, in the restlessness of the child's asking and seeking, of the adolescent's doubts and despairs, of the adult's desires and struggles. God is present but not as God; he is present as the unknown force in us that makes us restless.

But in some moments he appears as God. The unknown force in us which caused our restlessness becomes manifest as the God in whose hands we are, who is our ultimate threat and our ultimate refuge. In such moments it is as though we were arrested in our hidden flight. But it is not an arresting by brute force, but one which has the character of a question. And we remain free to continue our flight. This is what happened to the disciples: they were powerfully arrested when Jesus first called them. But they remained free to flee again. And so they did when the hour of test came. And so it is with the church and all its members. They are arrested in their hidden flight and brought into the conscious presence of God. But they remain free to flee again, not only as individual men but also as bearers of the church, pushing the church itself upon the road to Galilee, driving it as far away as possible from the point where the eternal breaks into the temporal. Man is fleeing from God even in the church, the place in which we are supposed to be arrested by the presence of God. Even there we are in flight from him.

If the ultimate cuts into the life of a man, he tries to take cover in the preliminary. He runs for a safe place, fleeing from the attack of that which hits him with unconditional seriousness. And there are many places which look as safe to us as Galilee looked to the fleeing disciples.

III

Perhaps most effective in our time in providing safety from the threatening presence of God is the work we are doing. This was not always so. The attitude of the ancient man towards work is well summed up in the curse God pronounces over Adam: "In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread," and in the words of the 90th Psalm about the short years of our life: "yet their span is but toil and trouble." Later on bodily labor with its toil and its drudgery was left to the slaves, serfs or uneducated classes; and it was distinguished from creative work which was based on leisure time and hence, the privilege of the few. Medieval Christianity considered work as a discipline, especially in the monastic life. But in the last period of our history work has become the dominating destiny for all men, if not in reality, in demand. It is everything — discipline, production, creation. The difference between labor and work is gone. The fact that it stands under a curse in biblical view is forgotten. It has become a religion itself, the religion of modern industrial society. And it has all of us in its grip. Even if we were able to escape the punishment of starvation for not working, something within us would not permit an escape from the bondage to work. For most of us it is both a necessity and a compulsion. And as such it has become the favored way of the flight from God.

And nothing seems to be safer than this way. From it we get the satisfaction of having fulfilled our duty. We are praised by others and by ourselves for "work well done"! We are providing support for our family or care for its members. We overcome day by day the dangers of leisure, boredom and disorder! We get a good conscience out of it and — as a cynical philosopher has said — at the end of it a good sleep. And if we do that kind of work which is called creative, an even higher satisfaction results — the joy of bringing something new into being. If somebody protests that this is not his way of fleeing from God, we should ask him: Did you never draw a balance sheet of your whole being, and if you did it honestly and discovered many points on the negative side, did you not write then on the other side your work and in this way gained a positive balance? The pharisean of today would boast before God not so much of his obedience to the law and of his religious exercises as of his hard work and his disciplined successful life. And — he would also find sinners with whom he could favorably compare himself.

IV

For there is another way to flee from God: the way which promises to lead us into the abundance of life and which keeps its promise to a certain extent. It is not necessarily the way of the prodigal son in the parable of Jesus. It can be the acceptance of the fullness of life opened to us by a searching mind and the driving power of love towards the greatness and beauty of creation. Such longing for life does not need to close our eyes to the tragedy within greatness, to the darkness within light, to the pain within pleasure, to the ugliness within beauty. Perhaps the life of all of us would be more abundant if more men and women dared to experience the abundance of life. But this also can be a way of fleeing from God, just as the way of labor and work. In the ecstacy of the living the limits of the abundance of life are forgotten. I do not speak of the shallow methods of having a good time, of the desire for fun and entertainment. This is in most cases the other side of the flight from God under the cover of labor and work. It is called recreation and is justified by everybody as a means for working more effectively. But I speak of the ecstacy of living which includes participation in the highest and the lowest of life in one and the same experience. This demands courage and passion; but it also can be a flight from God. And whoever lives in this way should not be judged

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"It Is a Terrible Thing to Fall Into the Hands of the Living God"

HOW FREE IS

SOMETIMES a particular church is singularly praised for its free pulpit. The implication is plain that it is outstanding because of this characteristic. Whenever I hear such a citation I wonder if this actually constitutes an invidious comparison with other churches. According to Protestant principles can there possibly be any church lacking this distinction? Are there Protestant pulpits which are *not* free? Is the Bill of Rights as relevant to the pulpit as it is to the public park?

In these terribly trying times we churchmen ought to take a closer look at the freedom of the pulpit. As in so many other things we are pretty glib in taking it for granted. Just how free is the pulpit? As the preacher stands in his pulpit week after week is he truly free to preach the gospel as God gives him the light to understand it? If there are any shackles on his speaking we ought to be finding out what they are.

Though the preacher himself may be slow to recognize it and hesitant to confess it, there is mounting evidence that the average pulpit is not free. It appears to me that the preacher's freedom is threatened both from without and from within. In these days of racial, political and economic turmoil powerful forces have made it plain that they do not want "issues" dealt with in the pulpit. The John Kaspers and Governor Faubuses can speak out as they will, but many a preacher knows that he will be dismissed from his church if he uses his pulpit to plead for integration. Our great state of Ohio was rocked from stem to stern in the last election by a proposed Right to Work Amendment. Feelings ran high and the people were under siege from both camps with a constant bombardment of propaganda and counter propaganda. In this atmosphere one of our fine young preachers was warned by an industrialist and leading member of his church that if he dared to declare himself in opposition to the amendment the rich man would withdraw his subscription to the church.

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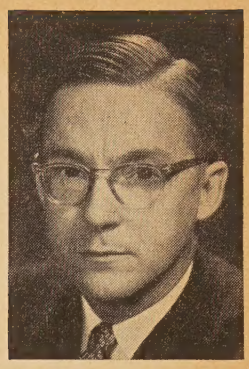
Perhaps one of the most sincere and serio attacks upon the preacher's freedom was launch by Clarence B. Randall, a devoted churchman a chairman of the board of Inland Steel. Mr. Ra dall, who has been violently attacked himself fellow businessmen who consider him too libera has nonetheless demanded that preachers desi from "social action" pronouncements. In his boo *Freedom's Faith* Mr. Randall declares that th church is "holy because it stands serenely above a controversy." He also reveals that "the busines man wants no politics from his minister. Not fo a moment does he wish to restrict his pastor fro exercising his own privileges as a citizen by ente ing freely into every phase of American debate, bu he expects him to come down out of the pulpit t do it."[1] Surely Mr. Randall is right in expectin his minister to take off his clerical gown whe working in precinct politics, but would he tie th preacher's tongue in the pulpit when it comes t facing the moral problems of our society? Can h really believe that the church is "holy because i stands serenely above all controversy"? Has h never heard of Amos, Hosea, Isaiah and Jeremiah Are preachers to keep silent while the controversia evils of racism, nuclear poisoning, and alcoholism rage in the world? If this is what men like Mr Randall really expect and obtain from their preach ers, then the pulpit is not free. Its freedom i destroyed from without.

Threat from Within

But far more serious and tragic is the threa from within. The freedom of the pulpit is being destroyed by default and disuse. Make no mistake about it: preachers are being silenced by their own consent. We suffer from the inward disease of acquiescence. We have acquiesced in the spirit of our times. Here is a word we ought to understand. When we acquiesce to some demand, and so agree to it, we become relaxed and "at rest." This is what the original Latin word meant. The words "quiescent" and "quiet" are drawn from the same

[1] Clarence B. Randall, *Freedom's Faith* (Boston: Little Brown & Co., 1953). Used by permission.

By Lee C. Moorehead



THE PULPIT?

source. Apparently freedom of thought and expression are not as important to us as building and paying for new churches, acquiring better parsonages, getting higher salaries, and driving classier cars. The increasing material well-being and social prestige of the clergy is tending to mute the prophetic voice of the pulpit. Our laymen have treated us to the advantages of "gracious living" which mark the middle class. But they have also tranquilized us into believing that all is well in Zion, and we have tricked ourselves by our acceptance of all of this into surrendering the freedom of our pulpits. Though our profession has overcome much of its material poverty, it has nonetheless become increasingly disinterested in its glorious freedom. We enjoy a degree of material security almost unknown to our predecessors, but this security is social, economic, ecclesiastical. It is not spiritual.

Near the end of his significant essay in American religious sociology, *Protestant-Catholic-Jew*, Will Herberg makes this damning observation:

> In these circumstances, it would seem to be the office of prophetic religion to raise a word of warning against inordinate national pride and self-righteousness as bound to lead to moral confusion, political irresponsibility, and the darkening of counsel. But the contemporary religious mood is very far indeed from such prophetic transcendence. Aside from occasional pronouncements by a few theologians or theologically-minded clergymen, religion in America seems to possess little capacity for rising above the relativities and ambiguities of the national consciousness and bringing to bear the judgment of God upon the nation and its ways.[2]

This is surely a condemnation of those who *could* possess and use the freedom of the pulpit if they only would. The pulpit is never free when its occupants temper and taint their message with the prevailing spirit of the times.

Now it should be admitted that thus far this discussion is an over-simplification. We need to move closer and analyze the freedom of the pulpit more critically. I want to suggest that the pulpit is free insofar as these five ingredients are available:

First, this freedom requires intellectual toil on the part of the preacher. He who preaches off of the top of his head is misusing his freedom. The preacher has no rights in the pulpit which can be won without hard intellectual labor. Simone Weil spoke a relevant word in her book, *The Need for Roots*. "There has been a lot of freedom of thought over the past few years," she declared, "but no thought. Rather like the case of a child who, not having any meat, asks for salt with which to season it."[3] The preacher's demand for freedom will look mighty silly if pap is all he can produce in the pulpit. And if such be the case he will sound like a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal — loud, but empty of meaning. Alexander Pope once said that "It is with narrow-souled people as with narrow-necked bottles; the less they have in them the more noise they make in pouring out." An empty-minded preacher sounding off in the pulpit is abusing his freedom.

The perceptive persons in any congregation will see beneath the surface of a preacher's words where either the disciplines or dissipations of preparation will be discerned. There is a vital stewardship of time and intelligence which a preacher must exert if he is to deserve to preach with freedom.

The Question of Taste

Second, to earn his freedom a preacher ought to observe the canons of good taste, judgment and discrimination. The pulpit is no place for loose and lascivious talk. Nonetheless one is surprised occasionally by exhibitions of bad taste. Humor can be nobly and effectively used, but it can also be puerile and degrading. Moreover the pulpit is no place for banal comments on the passing scene. It is simply bad taste to deal with petty politics. Once I was embarrassed by a guest in my pulpit who went to great lengths to assure my congregation that the salvation of America lay in the hands of the Republican Party, and that Robert A. Taft would be the next President of the United States. Even the most ardent Republicans present winced at that and one party regular confessed to me that

[2] From: *Protestant-Catholic-Jew* by Will Herberg. Copyright 1955 by Will Herberg. Reprinted by permission of Doubleday & Co., Inc.

[3] Simone Weil, *The Need for Roots* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1952). Used by permission.

he thought the preacher had spoken in extremely bad taste.

The determination of what constitutes good taste is, of course, a delicate matter. Certainly a responsible preacher never uses his pulpit to berate an adversary personally, nor to reveal a confidence, no matter how juicily it might spice his sermon. I personally believe there is a fine distinction which emerges when petty political issues are compared with great political principles. I should never recommend to my people the candidacies of any politicians, though I believe that a preacher in Ohio is fully within the limits of propriety this fall if he declares himself on the Right to Work Amendment. This amendment had been frankly presented to the electorate by its chief advocates as a moral issue. How can a preacher remain silent on a moral issue which convulses the state when his very business has to do with morality?

Lightnings of Love

Third, it is essential that the freedom of the pulpit be exercised with love. There are many times when a preacher feels himself pitted in his pronouncements against the views of his people. If he does not then speak to them in love, if he has not loved them in all of the dimensions of his ministry, he hasn't got a chance of being heard and heeded. But let him go with his people through the valleys of fear and sorrow, let him climb with them to the peaks of life's joy, let him live with them and know them and be their minister, and they will listen to him respectfully in whatever he has to say. I once heard the late Joseph M. M. Gray declare it to be his faith that a minister can change the climate of a congregation's thinking if he will only preach to them out of a pastorate of love. These lines of Henry Barnett, entitled "I Heard a Prophet," illustrate this truth:

> I bowed to his words; they gathered; they broke
> Over cowering conscience and impulse; they drove
> In echoes of passions that cried in their pain,
> The thunder that follows the lightnings of love.[4]

The thunder of prophetic preaching can be spoken to the hearts of men only if it is preceded by "the lightnings of love." For "if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing."

Fourth, a preacher cannot grasp the freedom of the pulpit and make the gospel of Christ a live issue without the catalyst of courage. It would be an utterly unnerving ordeal for a preacher to stand in a free pulpit and contradict the spirit of his time without the enabling power of courage. The exercise of freedom in any field demands manly courage. Yet I think it can be said that much preaching is puny these days because pusillanim pervades the pulpit. The truth is that we afraid to preach the gospel in the face of pres realities. It takes immense courage, for example, stare a mob in the face and say that segregation a sin. Yet here and there, there are truly her preachers who, under fire and staring down i their open graves, refuse to be throttled down the idling purr of innocuous and insipid sayin Martin Luther once said that "A preacher must both a soldier and a shepherd. He must nouri defend, and teach; he must have teeth in mouth, and be able to bite and fight."

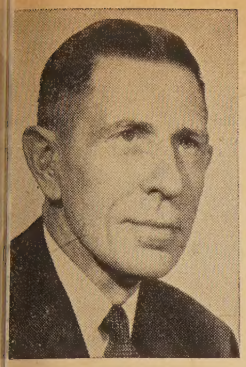
Laymen's Support

Fifth, it ought to be recognized that the pres vation of the freedom of the pulpit is invariab due to a kind of holy compact between a preach and his people. However eloquent a preach might be in his assumption of freedom he cou not endure forever without the defense and su port of his laymen. To maintain this freedo laymen have got to believe in it too. In Cante bury, England, several years ago I saw this noti on a church door: "The Word of God will preached in this Room on Lord's Day at 6: P.M. — God Willing." Indeed God's Word cann be preached unless he is willing, but it is als true that the people must be willing as well. Fo what good does it do to preach the Word if th people will not listen? Every great pulpit di tinguished for its freedom exists in the last analys only because of the faith of its laymen. The lat Ernest Fremont Tittle shall be always for me hero. I heard him many times make the pulpit First Methodist Church, Evanston, Illinois, rin with the freedom of prophetic utterances. But am convinced that this demonstration of greatnes cannot be finally accounted for save with referenc to the valor of lay leadership which caused th official board of that church to issue an histori statement when outside forces sought to remove it preacher. That statement said: "We stand for a free pulpit and a free church. We do not expec or desire a minister simply to echo the opinions o the congregation, and we do not assert our indi vidual agreement with all of our minister's utter ances. But we vigorously resent the effort of out side organizations to dictate to the church or t prescribe its message. . . ."

That statement has a powerful meaning fo me as I too preach from a pulpit whose freedom has been vigorously and valiantly guarded by great laymen for over fifty years. One day many years ago, Dr. Tucker, a predecessor, condemned from the pulpit the political practices of the Governor of the State of Ohio. Following the service a group of five lawyers was waiting for Dr. Tucker when the church had emptied. They informed

(Continued on page 21)

[4] Henry Barnett, "I Heard a Prophet" (Nashville: *motive* magazine, October 1951). Used by permission.



A Model Mind for Modern Men

By Frederick W. Schroeder

Have this mind among yourselves, which you have in Christ Jesus. . . . Philippians 2:5.

WITH these words St. Paul introduces a passage of Scripture that is theological in character but pastoral in purpose. What the apostle goes on to say about Christ may not be the most complete Christology ever written, but for sheer brevity and lyrical beauty it can hardly be surpassed. One gets the impression that this succinct summary of the messianic character and mission of Jesus, moving from pre-existence to incarnation and from humiliation to exaltation, was a kind of spontaneous, unplanned detour of the apostle's intent to commend to the church at Philippi an essential quality of the Christian way of life.

For a brief moment the apostle seemingly became so captivated by the mystery and majesty of this singular life that he lost sight of his primary purpose, though with no loss to it in either continuity or persuasiveness. On the contrary, the apostle's digression, if such it may be called, lent force to his pastoral purpose. It also infused his purpose with a timeless quality, which it might not have had if he had not invited his readers to look to the Pioneer and Perfecter of the faith. When therefore we are admonished to have the mind among ourselves that was in Christ Jesus and remember that Christ is our eternal contemporary, we may properly speak of being confronted here with a model mind for modern man.

I

It is noteworthy that the emphasis of St. Paul is upon a mindset, an attitude or outlook, rather than upon a code of morals. This, if not exclusively peculiar, is certainly fundamental to Christianity. This is not to say that there are no rules to follow or laws to be obeyed. Christianity is not to be associated with antinomianism. But the Christian faith cannot be reduced to a set of rules and regulations. One can never say: "Do this, do that; and you will have fulfilled all righteousness." Judaism attempted to do this and became bogged down in legalism. One cannot reduce Christian living to a set of clearly defined rules of conduct. For one thing, the Christian faith is too dynamic to be codified; and for another, life is too complex, too fluid, to be able to legislate for every conceivable situation that might arise.

Of laws designed to produce well-behaved men and women or to create a well-ordered society the modern world seems to have enough and to spare. Each year legislative bodies add something to the body of laws designed to safeguard every citizen's right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. But strangely enough, injustice, oppression, delinquency and overt acts of violence continue to plague us as much as ever. If laws could make a good world the Kingdom of heaven should be in our midst. What appears to be lacking is the mind to keep the laws. This is partially true even among those generally regarded to be pillars of righteousness. Upright people are known to cut legal corners when the danger of apprehension or disgrace is not too great. Laws are effective only to the extent that people are minded to observe and obey them. Without a right attitude toward life the best of rules and regulations will be in vain. Paul's emphasis upon a mindset is therefore of first-rate importance.

II

Even more important is his insistence that it be the mind that was in Christ Jesus. Very likely he did so in the conviction that one example — especially the example of one who had been without sin — is more helpful than a half-dozen precepts. Right attitudes are more apt to be acquired from people than from abstract principles. Dean Inge once said: "Religion is caught rather than taught." A religious teacher counts for more than a lesson in religion or about religion. Religious lessons are easily forgotten, but genuinely religious teachers cast a beneficent shadow beyond the length of their years. The *Reader's Digest* for many years has included in each issue a short biographical sketch

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under the heading "The Most Unforgettable Character I've Met." How apt that description may have been in every instance is a matter of opinion, but Jesus of Nazareth easily qualifies as the most unforgettable and also the most influential person of all time. The historian Lecky said of Jesus that the record of three short years of his life has regenerated and softened mankind more than "all the disquisitions of philosophers, and all the exhortations of moralists." Undoubtedly he took the teachings of Jesus into account in arriving at this considered judgment; nevertheless, it is the man Christ Jesus, more than his teaching, that has shaped and changed the course of human events. History lends unmistakable support to the soundness of Paul's pedagogical principle: "Have this mind among yourselves, which you have in Christ Jesus."

Moreover, there is no one so completely worthy of emulation as Jesus of Nazareth. In recent decades, when the higher Christology has again come to the fore and men speak of Jesus as Lord rather than Master, less stress seems to be placed upon regarding him as our example than was customary in the early decades of this century. When the theological emphasis was upon the humanity of Jesus it was quite the fashion to think of him as the one to be emulated. Taking their cue from Charles M. Sheldon's widely read book, *In His Steps,* Christians were reminded to ask themselves: "What would Jesus do?" In retrospect it is not difficult to see that this question reflected a naivete about the sinful nature of man as well as a failure to comprehend the uniqueness of Jesus Christ.

To do what Jesus did is no simple human possibility. The sons of men cannot duplicate the example of the Son of man. But it would be most unfortunate if our more realistic view of man and our more mature understanding of Jesus as the Christ should persuade us that we need not take Jesus seriously. To call Jesus Lord and make no attempt to follow in his footsteps or to acquire a mind like unto his is to question his humanity and to play fast and loose with the imperative in the gospel. Not for a moment dare we lose sight of the fact that he who is the Perfecter of our faith is also its Pioneer; and a pioneer is meant to be followed. This does not call for a slavish imitation of his every act and deed; it does however call for a serious endeavor to understand his spirit, and to incarnate it in character and conduct. The mind of Jesus is indeed a model for modern man.

III

If we pursue this suggestion a little farther and inquire just why the mind of Jesus is a model for modern man, we need only turn our attention to the Christology that follows Paul's pastoral exhortation to get the answer. First of all he mentions the humility of Jesus. He, who was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped. On the contrary, he divested himself of all divine prerogatives. He took the form of a servant; he was born in the likeness of men. He lived as a man among men. He asked no favors. No servant's task was ever too menial, no sacrifice was ever too great. The humility of the Son of man, says Paul, is becoming to the sons of men — to modern men perhaps more than to men in an previous generation.

Modern man, influenced perhaps more by the Renaissance than the Reformation, confident of his competence to exercise dominion over all things visible and invisible, including the infinite reaches of space, and also fairly well-convinced of his inherent decency, is not too well-conditioned for humility. If there is any one word of Scripture that strikes a responsive chord in our hearts it is the word of the Psalmist, "Thou hast made [man] little less than God, and dost crown him with glory and honor." This is however not the only thing the Psalmist said about man. He was painfully aware of man's insignificance in comparison with the vastness of God's creation; but we have a way of picking out those words and ideas that are particularly to our liking.

Unfortunately, this exalted notion that modern man tends to have of himself is only one side of the picture. Our remarkable achievements in the realm of nature — and they are truly remarkable, as our seemingly imminent conquest of space indicates — are more than offset by our failures in the realm of human relationships. It is the irony of our time that unparalleled misery exists in more than one half of the world at the very moment that we have the necessary know-how for unparalleled prosperity. And is it not ironical too that we should be so insecure at the very moment that our mastery over nature should really make us unequivocally secure? Never before in the history of the race has mankind had reason to fear annihilation as much as he does today. The fabulous amount of money our nation and other nations spend annually to perfect and multiply weapons of defense and offense contributes precious little to our sense of security. All things considered, there is little reason for pride. If anything, we have reason to be humble. So we do well to look to Jesus to learn from him the way to humility.

IV

But humility will hardly become the hallmark of modern man without obedience, which was its corollary in the mind of Christ. Paul said of Jesus, he "became obedient unto death, even death on a cross." The shame and the agony of the cross are the measure of Christ's obedience. Such obedience never comes easily. It did not come easily for Jesus. His agonizing prayer in the garden on the night of his betrayal and arrest shows how difficult it was. Must he really go the way of the cross? Could it

(Continued on page 13)

The Cause and the Credentials

By Martin E. Marty

Working together with him, then, we entreat you not to accept the grace of God in vain. For he says, "At the acceptable time I have listened to you, and helped you on the day of salvation." Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation. We put no obstacle in any one's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way; through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, tumults, labors, watching, hunger; by purity, knowledge, forbearance, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything. II Corinthians 6:1-10, The Epistle for Invocavit.

CHRISTIANS whose worship centers around pulpit and table will never understand all the mysteries of the turns taken before the altar in liturgical churches. A Protestant layman, in a part of the country where liturgical Protestants are seldom represented, once asked me about their form of worship: "Isn't that where the minister preaches with his back to the congregation?" The question which confused prayer with sermon may have seemed absurd from the point of view of communication. Yet we have all heard sermons preached at the induction of ministers which are, in effect, uttered with the speaker's back to the people. They are directed to one man. This hardly fulfills the function of Christian proclamation.

Lest there be any doubt I would, in the stance of these words from an ancient letter to a young congregation, face the people to represent a cause and to present some credentials. We can always rely on the acoustics of the church to create a bounceback, so clergy assembled in the chancel can receive the message by indirection, as it were! There seems little point in directing the sermon to them alone; such messages tend to be "clubby." The critic Richard Chase has accused clergymen of being like admirals; while there are real grievances, they should spend less time commiserating with each other and "totting up the special tribulations of their professions."

The Entreaty of the Present

So, with back to the clergy whom we honor today in this sacred rite, we turn to the people. As we concentrate on St. Paul's self-defensive and autobiographical words their strange character breaks in on our consciousness. He speaks of a cause and his credentials. The cause seems so obviously to be unchanged and the credentials to be so apparently different. This deserves exploring.

The cause, if Paul is worth listening to, involves an entreaty and a proclamation. "Working together with God, then, we entreat you not to accept the grace of God in vain." The entreaty of the present is based on the past, just as a new minister prospers from the efforts of those who announced God's grace in the past. This will not change with a change of personnel. In the message there can be no compromise. Now, as then, the message is simple at the heart (however complex its setting must become): "We have behaved . . . toward you, with holiness and godly sincerity, not by earthly wisdom but by the grace of God." Now as then, it is this: man is judged by the law of God. He can make no claims of his own. He brings along his little cartload of achievements and they seem so lightweight. He chalks up his moral score and it totals zero. The law accuses and annihilates him. But "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation."

MARTIN E. MARTY, *a member of both* The Christian Century *and The Pulpit staffs, has recently completed* A Short History of Christianity *to be published by Meridian this spring. The above sermon was preached on Invocavit at the Church of the Good Shepherd, Palos Park, Illinois, at the installation of the Reverend Harry N. Huxhold as pastor and Dr. Jaroslav J. Pelikan, Jr., as his assistant.*

Around this Good News the congregation which seats a new minister was called into being.

With the entreaty, phrased in terms borrowed from the Second Isaiah, goes the proclamation: *now* is the acceptable time; *now* is the day of salvation! The immediate concern can never be the ancient past, viewed as past and as a sequence of events and facts with no present weight. The future? "Time is the enemy," said Leonard Bernstein; and he is often quoted by one of the ministers being inducted today. The Christian views this passing of time not simply with anxiety; he views the future with openness. But *now* is the weighted, freighted moment. All things are new. This is the cause which is in quest of ambassadors. And ambassadors must commend themselves with credentials. The cause, which is obviously unchanged, gave us, in this sense, no trouble (yet how troubling it is!). But we still have the question of credentials.

Embarrassing Disparity

What do we do with ministers who commend themselves to congregations with credentials apparently so different from those St. Paul and his fellow madmen could offer? It is difficult to evade this question because the early apostles proclaimed what the common sense of Christians in every age has recognized. More than we would like, the effectiveness of the cause seems to depend on the credentials of its carriers. The disparity between the reconciling message and the reconciling representatives was sufficiently gross that Paul knew it: "We have this treasure in earthen vessels"; "While we are still in this tent, we sigh with anxiety." But the disparity between the early representatives and the latter-day counterparts seems even more gross. This is embarrassing: "We put no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry." (Paul was, incidentally, making a "pitch" for a collection, in the course of this letter. This gave him double reason for wanting no obstacle. We all know enough about that.)

In four grand yet short-breathed phrases he clutters our complacent chancel with some disturbing clusters of credentials. The first portfolio identifies the minister by his suffering, his identification with the wounds of Christ; he is "always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies." Yet we can so easily fall into parody by comparison. We commend ourselves through *endurance;* it has been a hard winter, and the car was often stuck as we set about making calls. Through *afflictions;* the unmet budget last year. Through *hardships;* remember the day the furnace broke down? Through *calamity;* remember the time you forgot to thank Mrs. Smith for selling more coathangers than any one else in the Ladies Aid drive? Through *beatings;* oh, yes, the minister was outvoted once. Through *imprisonments* — in a warm suburb[an] home. Through *tumults* (I have heard of nor[e] and *labors* (you never had it so good!) and *wat[ch]ing* the upward surge of graphs of progress, a[nd] *hunger:* oh, come now!

This is obvious parody and we are making [a] mistake by looking at the externals of the minist[ry] for this sense of suffering. It is equally artificial [to] suggest that we must invent sufferings and solic[it] martyrdoms to be disciples, however true this m[ay] have seemed to us as sophomores. When a Roma[n] Catholic priest asked British novelist Charles W[il]liams, "You wouldn't ask Christ for a soft jo[b] would you?" Williams was frank enough to rep[ly] in rhetoric, "Well, wouldn't you?" Let us b[e] honest. And yet in the dark twilights of minister[s'] souls, in the face of new temptations, in avoidanc[e] of easy compromise, unsung suffering still ma[y] remain the mark of the ministry.

But Paul's second phrase is also apparently di[s]tant. Here is the alternative pattern of glories tha[t] seem never to be ours: we commend ourselves a[s] ministers "by purity, knowledge, forbearance . . . and all the rest. Again, there seems to be only th[e] glimpse of glory, the elusive grasp of its endurin[g] weight. It is in the third cluster that we begin t[o] receive a clue, for here Paul presents the contrast[s]. No matter which way the ball bounces or th[e] pendulum swings, there is opportunity for th[e] cause to come through. Whether bearing the wea[p]pons of righteousness for the right hand or the left[,] in honor or dishonor, in ill repute or good reput[e] it matters little: we can still be transparent to th[e] divine. Or, in the more opaque metaphor of Paul[,] ministers can be clay vessels that do succeed in car[-]rying the treasure.

It is in the final group of contradictions tha[t] the revelation of the way in which cause is borne by credentials becomes clear. The impostors are true, the unknown are well-known, the dying live[,] the punished survive, the sorrowful rejoice, the poor make others rich, the have-nots have. As Luther said, God too reveals himself through contradictions. He veils and conceals at once the humanity of Christ and his servants. So what is it, if we take our clue from the contradictions, that you may fairly ask of your ministers? You may ask that they represent among you, in the title of Bishop Neill's new book, *A Genuinely Human Existence.* The parsons are to be persons in the fullest sense, recalling always that "man is the creature made visible in the mirror of Jesus Christ." The distance from the early apostles is only apparent if we keep this in mind.

The pastors' impressive seminary and university careers as students and teachers will impress you little if they are not first of all representative men and servants among you. Their eminence will wear thin if they are not your pastors in the best sense of

that term in joy and sorrow, at bedside and graveside. And in this participation in your lot, if they are faithful to the cause and if they "accept not the grace in vain," the cause can come through.

We are back, then, to the question of the cause. It remains the standard and the judge. All the pressures of society and the ethos of today's ministry would tend to induce a relaxation of the sense of mission. Now, as then, the Good News offends. These are glorious days for "the common man with the common message" in the pulpit. But all of us who preach are judged by the portrait of the "Unknown Citizen" in W. H. Auden's poem, which might serve as a stereotype of the common "success-minded" minister:

> Our researchers into Public Opinion are content
> That he held the proper opinions for the time of year;
> When there was peace he was for peace; when there was war, he went.
> He was married and added five children to the population,
> Which our Eugenist says was the right number for a parent of his generation,
> And our teachers report that he never interfered with their education.
> Was he free? Was he happy? The question is absurd:
> Had anything been wrong, we should certainly have heard.*

Something is wrong, and we ought to hear from uncommon men an uncommon message of an uncommon cause. Paul pointed the issue: "If any one has no love for the Lord, let him be accursed . . . The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you. My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen."

Postscript: In these words I have not turned the back on the congregation. I have been preaching to you all. In the terms of Jesus and Paul, you will recall, *we are all ministers.* The cause is obviously unchanged. Are our credentials in order?

Model Mind

(Continued from page 10)

really be the Father's will that he lay down his life a ransom for many? Such and similar questions must have passed through his mind as he wrestled in prayer. But once it became clear to him that there could be no other way, he accepted the cross without murmur or complaint.

Obedience is not a very popular word in our vocabulary. It suggests repressive measures that interfere with our freedom. And most of us want to live our lives without interference, be it from parents, preachers, or policemen. Even the great moral absolutes of the Mosaic code, just and righteous as we know them to be, sound forbidding to our ears. We do not like to have anyone tell us what to do and what not to do. Yet we also know that without obedience to precepts and principles and to governments and people in authority, moral and civic anarchy would set in and make a madhouse of our world.

Now the kind of obedience that is worthy to be associated with the mind of Jesus is something other than outward conformity. Outward conformity does not necessarily mean obedience. A boyhood experience comes to mind that may illustrate the difference between conformity and obedience. On several occasions I was given the task of clearing weeds from a cornfield with no other tool than a hoe and my two bare hands. Hoeing weeds on a hot summer day is not particularly alluring to a lad of ten or twelve. As far as I can recall I always did what I was told to do, for I knew what the consequences of disobedience would be. But my obedience was really nothing more than conformity. It certainly was not the kind of internal, radical obedience that we see in the mind of Jesus. Outwardly I complied, inwardly I rebelled. When Jesus was obedient unto death on a cross, he was obedient in the sense that his will was brought into full accord with what he knew to be the Father's will. He did not go to Calvary as one who was driven by the taskmaster's lash, but as one who accepted the will of God as wise and just, and made it his very own.

Trust and Obedience

It is doubtful that such internal, radical obedience can be given apart from faith in God. Unless man through faith comes to know that God is good and gracious, he will find it very hard to accept the divine will, which frequently runs counter to our inclinations. But faith in God as being both a loving Father and a righteous Ruler makes obedience possible. This removes the sting from obedience. "Trust and obey," so runs the refrain of an old gospel hymn; "for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus than to trust and obey." Notice the combination: trust and obey. Without trusting there is no obeying without an element of rebellion. And without obeying there is no trusting worthy of the name. Humility is likewise grounded in faith. Only the man who has faith in God is relieved of the pagan necessity of maintaining his status by foolish pretensions and vain imaginations.

Humility and obedience are not the only elements of the mind of Jesus. St. Paul surely did not intend to suggest that these two exhaust the Christ-like mind; neither would we want to say that he regarded these to be important above all else. But modern man, being conditioned the way he is, has need of giving these two some priority. Humility and obedience — conceived in faith and nurtured by faith — are essential to anyone who would achieve freedom and maturity.

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Great Expectations

By David Noel Freedman

YOU, WHO have great expectations for yourself — *don't*. Secretaries have much to complain about these days, but it has ever been so. Baruch's lamentation has a familiar ring. One advantage Baruch had over the average secretary is that he worked for a prophet and was therefore the unusual recipient of a direct word from the Lord. Considering the sort of word it was, he may have thought differently.

Baruch had voiced a bitter complaint, "Woe is me, for Yahweh has added grief to my pains; I am worn out from groaning, and I have found no relief." We may see here the typical lot of the stenographer: the person behind the scenes who does the thankless, dirty work and gets no credit. In addition, working for a man like Jeremiah was doubtless not easy. We don't know what sort of employer Jeremiah was; while the fact that Baruch stuck by him through everything for twenty-five years or more is indicative of his basic virtue, we do know that Jeremiah's temperament was mercurial. The bitterness of his own life and his plunges into despair must have been an exhausting burden to Baruch.

There was also the particular problem of being scribe to a prophet like Jeremiah This man was a troublemaker. In addition to the usual disabilities, there was the added hazard of personal risk and danger. Being secretary to a man in danger of death, who spent his time alternating between jail and the stocks, with a price on his head, in hiding, etc., had its own particular attraction. At least it was not dull. As Jeremiah's public appearances became more and more restricted, Baruch's role necessarily increased in importance — and danger.

The immediate source or occasion of Baruch's explosion is provided by the narrative of chapter 36, dated to the 4th year of Jehoiakim, ca. 605 B.C. A few years earlier Jeremiah had made a spectacular appearance at the temple in which he announced its imminent destruction. As a result, he barely escaped with his life and wore out his welcome to such an extent that he was apparently barred permanently from its preaching list.

The result was that in 605, Jeremiah sent Baruch with a message to the temple — a compilation, or anthology of previous utterances of the first 23 years of his ministry, doubtless including references to the inflammatory address which barred him from the temple.

It is difficult to know the exact feelings of Baruch the Scribe as he carried out his mission and read off the scroll of Jeremiah to the people in the temple. Perhaps at first he relished the role; perhaps he had great expectations as to the results; we hear of these later. But a man is not above his master. Baruch's reception while not as dramatic as Jeremiah's was not better. And he ended up in the same typical fashion as Jeremiah — he fled to a place of hiding. To make matters worse, the king methodically destroyed the scroll and warmed his hands over the burning fragments — a very expensive fire indeed. Baruch's only reward was the far from pleasant task of copying the entire scroll from start to finish and (secretaries will appreciate this) with numerous additions. That was too much for Baruch and he cried out.

The Lord's Answer

Whether Baruch requested some word from the Lord, or whether Jeremiah felt it advisable in view of Baruch's spiritual and emotional condition is not clear. In any case, the word was delivered. Like many similar words to individuals, like Moses, Elijah, Jonah, and Jeremiah himself, this one has a bit of iron in it; it is also startling as a piece of self-revelation: a glimpse of the operation of the monumental heart and mind behind the whole universe, almost a piece of divine reflection, accidentally revealed to the prophet.

> Behold! What I have built I must tear down; what I have planted I must pluck up, even the whole earth.

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Baruch's complaint has stirred God to contemplation of *His* troubles and sorrows. Recognizing the reality and severity of Baruch's difficulties, there is nevertheless something pathetic and ridiculous in his complaint when measured against the magnitude of universal woe and suffering with which God must wrestle. When God is dismantling his world, built with the hands of affection and concern, and with the hope of the establishment of an order of peace and good will, it is not a time for a man to complain.

The Other Word

The world was coming apart at the seams in 605 B.C. The great Assyrian Empire had disappeared in a universal conflagration of war and revolution; Medes, Babylonians, Scythians, Egyptians, were all struggling for supremacy and marching armies back and forth across the nations of the world, plunging all into destruction. But worse than these was the collapse of the people of God, the kingdom of Judah. After 600 years, the end was at hand. Hopes and expectations, all were crushed, the grand plan of salvation ruined. The building must come down, the planting must be uprooted, and the glimpse of divine pain, bewilderment, sadness, as the world of men sinks into chaos, should silence our protests and complaints, and make us keenly and permanently aware of what is constantly on the mind of God.

As though catching himself in mid-thought, God addresses the next word to the question of Jeremiah; the answer to the matter of Baruch. "And you, you who seek for yourself great things — *don't seek!*" Here is revealed that behind Baruch's complaint, behind his grumbling was frustration and disappointment. Perhaps Baruch had hoped to bask in the glory of a true prophet, perhaps be co-architect of a new order. Maybe as he marched to the temple, he thought that his career was about to begin — who knows?

But this was not a time for great expectations. It was an era of judgment, of destruction. "Behold, I am bringing destruction upon all humanity [mankind]." As Jeremiah himself had bitterly to learn, his task was not that of happier days, like Moses to lead a people to freedom, like David to create a great kingdom, or Solomon to erect a mighty temple, but to warn of ruin, to foretell disaster, and to salvage something from the wreckage, enough so that later hope could be fulfilled. A new age would begin, but not for 70 years, not until a new generation had been born, lived and died. As Jeremiah's aide, Baruch must learn this too.

The only consolation was that Baruch would live, his only reward would be his life. His hand was needed to record the inspired words, to paint the picture of his master, to leave a testimony of the age of divine judgment for future generations to ponder. "I shall grant thee thy life as a prize — in all the places that you wander." This much Baruch could count on: he would be a witness of all the ordeal through which his people would pass. Not until the last refugee had fled, the last wall battered down, the last soldier slain, the last captive seized would he be allowed to lay down his pen. Twenty-five years later, we find him, still by the side of his master, still inscribing words of warning, terror and agony, as the tragedy is played out.

Baruch's bitter complaint is no surprise to us, for we are too "worn out from groaning and . . . have found no relief." And his world is understandable to a nearly unbearable degree; who does not behold the tearing and wrenching of all that has been built and planted — "even the whole earth"? With such similarity of situation and outcry the temptation to be the architects of a new order is hard upon us. But — as with Baruch — our response must come under the power of this warning: "Beware lest your expectations — great as they seem — are not great enough for what is happening and for what is needed. Prepare to live in unhappy days, witnessing to the judgment, to the ruin, to the ordeal through which all pass. Only so can you really honor the glory, the mystery, the suffering of God and the posterity which only he can bring to be."

Prayer

O GOD, whose breath blows upon us as a refreshing breeze; whose faith in us revives us as cool, clear water does the parched tongue; whose hand rests upon us as gently and firmly as does a mother's love; whose very power overcomes our weakness and becomes our strength, we pray for thy forgiveness.

Forgive us in our heightened sense of self-importance for being content with that conversation which is but an echo of our own opinions; for hearing only that music which is none other than the blowing of our own horns; for shutting out the cacophonous sound that is the wail of the world; for being concerned only with those who fit into our limited circle; and for withdrawing into ourselves when we should be going out in love and service to mankind.

We pray that thou wilt grant us the will and wisdom to use in thy service all the gifts, qualities and skills with which thou hast endowed us. Help us to recognize that we serve thee best when we serve each other. As we are forgiven for past follies and failures may we be guided by thee into fresh, fertile areas of Christian service. Amen. *Chester E. Hodgson, Kings Highway Methodist Church, Brooklyn, New York.*

The Church Too Often Forgets Its Reason for Existence

When Success Is Failure

By William F. Keucher

This man began to build and was not able to finish. Luke 14:30.

SO OUR LORD described the ridicule heaped upon a man, perhaps of Nazareth. His unfinished tower stood against the sky to remind him daily of his failure, and to make him the butt of his neighbors' levity. He had failed to count the cost, and his ambitious scheme never found realization. "So is he," said Jesus, shrewdly applying the force of this evident lesson to the crowds which followed him, "who fails to calculate the risks of his discipleship, and proves unwilling to pay down the full cost of a satisfying spiritual experience."

Consider this indictment — "this man began to build and could not finish" — as an apt commentary upon the life of King David, whose hopes were turned to disappointment, in that he failed to build the house of God. The record reveals that his greatest ambition was to build a temple for the living God; but that despite his desire, he failed to realize his dreams. Did he fail because his project and his plans were more ambitious than his *resources,* more demanding than his *interest,* more extended than his *time?*

Resources?

Many an ambitious project has failed for want of money. "The trouble with your salary," said the wife, seated beside a stack of unpaid bills, to her husband whose nose was buried in his evening paper, "its got a decimal point in it!" And that is the evident lack of many a worthwhile scheme. Numerous blueprints never get off the drawing board because there is no money.

But this was not the case with the King of Israel. To read the record of I Chronicles 28-30 is to be impressed with the elaborate and lavish preparations which David made for the temple. With 3000 talents of gold and 7000 talents of silver a wealth and surplus of materials are stored up against the day of building demand. If extravagance could guarantee the success of this venture here was a man who was willing to pay the full price to effect his purposes. "Because he had set his affection to the House of God," he gave over and above, out of his own personal resources. His example led many of his people to offer willingly in an effort to match the generosity of the King. David was a man who began to build but could not finish — but not for want of wealth or resources!

Interest?

Many a well-laid plan has gone wrong for lack of interest. So few possess the power to see things through. Hosts of men can make a fine start, and excel beyond all others, but as the day lengthens, their endurance diminishes and their work languishes. In religious circles — as elsewhere — it is possible for a man's interest to run down and peter out. When our work is sustained by external motives we cannot be depended upon to complete the routine tasks which soon become drudgery or to finish the rigorous course filled with obstacles. If we build to win human praise, our work may cease when in the place of praise we receive blame; if we toil for the sake of credit, the sound of our hammer may no longer ring when credit is withdrawn or mistakenly is offered to another account.

But it is evident that there was no flaw in David's interest. "With all my might" — this was the only way he could describe the moral energy and the interest with which he plied himself to his task. That he became a man who began to build and could not finish was not due to slackness of mind or flagging of interest.

Time?

Countless tourists have walked about the sacred precincts of the famed Washington Cathedral on Mount St. Albans. Services have been conducted in it since 1912, but the Cathedral is not yet finished. The present architect, Philip Frohman, who has been engaged with the Cathedral plans

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ince 1924 is impatient at the pace with which the work goes forward. Big cathedrals call for big money. A flying buttress costs $45,000, and to build a tower in 14th century Gothic demands about three and a half million dollars. Architect Frohman comments in a recent *Newsweek* story, "At the rate money is being collected, it will take another 50 years, I am running out of time." It may be small comfort for him to be told that other men and projects have faced the same urgency.

Some time ago we sat in a hospital room to visit with a man who, according to his doctor, was running out of time. He talked about the good years he had been given and the goals which at 44 were already reached. When we prayed together he thanked God, "for the future which is with Thee." But despite this clear-eyed faith in the face of death, it was evident that his plans extended far beyond the time which was alloted to him here.

But David's inability to build was not due to lack of time. To review his circumstances is to see that he possessed ample resources, he manifested persistent interest, and he was not trapped by time. He failed to realize his purpose due to a far more decisive factor.

The Purpose of Providence

He failed because he was set aside by divine providence. Another was raised up in his stead to fulfill God's purpose. Indeed it must be said that David's failure reflects the strength of his religious character rather than his weakness. His failure to build the temple of God helped to compound the elements of his success — for to fail was to succeed. Probably one of the severest tests of character comes at the point of submission to God's way and will. David wanted to build God's house, but he accepted and honored the purposes of God. Other men there are who have sought to take matters in their own hands and change the will of God. Prayer for them is a means of barter — to exchange God's plan for their plan and so to coerce the providence of God. But so to abandon the will of God as the integrating principle of life is to make shipwreck of our life as well as our faith!

If David's failure must be called success, then also it must be said that if he had accomplished his own desires, his success would have been failure. If Solomon's Temple with all of its glory had been reared as "David's" Temple, there could have been no Real Presence on the day of dedication. Here was a man who was willing to observe the limits marked out for him. He carried his preparations as far as he could go without transgressing the divine commandment. This is a lesson in faithfulness which we all need to observe.

But there is a deeper truth here. A man must identify himself with the divine will; he must live for God. His goals and aims must be given to him from above if they are to satisfy the human heart. If all our goals are temporal and can be reached in time, what need do we have for eternity? "But a man's reach must exceed his grasp — or what's a heaven for?"

So E. Y. Mullins said once, "no denomination can survive permanently except it embodies in its ideals and methods, the ultimate and fundamental truth which is in Jesus Christ." This is but a theological way of stating a truth which David voiced in more familiar fashion, "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain who build." Or this is but the judgment which Jesus voiced when saying, "Without me, ye can do nothing." Men can and do many things without Christ. They may receive human plaudits, but despite this praise, these projects are doomed to failure. We cannot succeed without Christ. History proves that it is folly to try.

Louis Halle retells a story which H. G. Wells had told earlier, about an Indian prince who was robbed by death of his bride whom he loved more than life. He called the best artisan in his realm to carve an exquisite alabaster tomb as a memorial to her loveliness and purity. The tomb soon became a shrine for pilgrims. But the prince was not satisfied. His sorrow and loss had not been voiced adequately.

He summoned the finest craftsmen in India to come to his principality. They raised a pavilion over the tomb which became the most famous monument in all India. As time passed, the prince felt that the beauty of the memorial did not match the greatness of his own love. He sent now for the greatest artisan in the world. They built a mausoleum larger than any palace in the land. The central chamber was made of marble and so vast that it looked like the vault of the sky. In the course of time the new monument became one of the wonders of the wide world.

Every day the prince and his architect paced the galleries high above the central chamber, looking down upon the throngs of tourists, who appeared like ants creeping across the marble floor. At last it seemed as if the memorial was equal to the royal feelings of the prince. But as the years went by, the prince became aware of some lingering imperfection, which he could not identify amid the lavish beauty. Pacing one day the familiar galleries, it suddenly came to him what this blemish was. He called his architect and pointed down to the middle of the marble floor, where the original alabaster tomb sat in exquisite loneliness; "Remove that thing!" he said.

So, if we could get rid of Christ and his costly standards, we could prosper more and our success could be made more evident and sure. Here is a pastor who whines that our churches are losing members because of our denominational stand against racial segregation. In effect he is saying, if we get rid of Jesus, we can get more members.

Another complains because his denomination enforces ideals of moral and social righteousness; still other strident voices charge that to believe in the principle of fellowship and cooperation with other Christians is to deface denominational currency, and to deflate its worth in the market. If we can get rid of Jesus, the spirit of James and John, the sons of thunder, may prove more successful in building a narrow exclusive church. Mark it down for a fact, any minister who is desperately anxious to succeed can do so — and his church can do so — if they can find a way to shake off the insistent claims of Christ and elude his quiet gaze which would consume our falseness. We can build our churches without Christ, but they have lost their right to be called by his name. We can begin and finish our pet projects, but they will loom large like towers of Babel.

A recent news article reported that, "among Prime Minister Nehru's many ambitions for India is to make its measures metric, its thermometer centigrade, and its coinage decimal." Through the length and breadth of India there are more than 140 different systems of weights and measures. Dates and records are kept according to thirty different calendars, the coinage system is archaic.

Having already established an approved calendar of twelve months and hoping soon to put weights and measures on the metric system, Nehru instituted new decimal coinage. He had decided to make the drastic change and face the hue and cry, while India was still unencumbered by adding machines and cash registers. "The later we made it," said Nehru, "the costlier and more difficult it would have been."

Now there is nothing more radical or revolutionary in our world than the gospel of Jesus Christ and the personal transformation of life it effects or the moral climate it produces in man's world. Where there is a new birth, if it is genuine, it must be followed by a new life, with new sympathies, values, standards, and attitudes. Our major trouble in America is that many of our social customs and our religious ideals are as archaic as India's coinage system. We have succeeded in building our great churches without Christ — and in proportion to that success we have failed!

The later we change our coinage system of religion which confuses conformity to a creed with personal loyalty to the living Christ, and belief in a ritual with faith in the reality of God, the more difficult it will be to pass the new currency of heaven. The later we change our prevalent social prejudices and suspicions based on the theory of white supremacy and Negroid inferiority, the more costly it will be. The later we change our sectarian pride which would identify any one denomination which is always partial and human, with the whole of Christ's church — which is the fullness of his body — the costlier it will be! The later we change the worldly canons of success which make th church an echo of all other voices, a dwarfe image of all other social groups, the more difficu it will be for us to be light and leaven and sal The costlier it will be for the world itself!

Surely, it is evident that to succeed apart fro Christ is to fail. To build a church or a denomin tion on the shifting sands of expediency is to fai When we prosper on the loss of Christ, or at th sacrifice of Christian principles, we have not reall won, whatever hollow victory men may ascribe t us. What could it profit a church to gain th whole world and lose her own soul? Or wha would a church give in exchange for her soul?

This man began to build and could not finish Indeed no man can apart from the purpose of Go and the continuing work of Christ in the world "Except the Lord build, they labor in vain wh build!"

Ordination Prayer

ETERNAL God, in spirit thou art witness t what is taking place in this hour. Thou ar aware of what is in the hearts and minds of thes people who look for leadership to help them wal in the paths of truth and righteousness, to teac them thy will concerning their lives amid worldl surroundings, to encourage them not only to re sist temptation but also to overcome evil with good and to inspire them to strive for Christlikeness i the living of their lives.

Thou knowest too the feelings and thought within him whom thou hast called to minister t these people. Upon him in the responsibilitie he now assumes, we ask thy special blessing.

Each time he comes to thee in prayer with humble and contrite heart, seeking power fo difficult tasks, wisdom for intricate problems, guid ance for teaching and patience for dealing with human nature, grant him assurance in Christian faith that he may find power sufficient for all o his needs and courage adequate for all of his ministry. Bless him now, O God, as he becomes ordained in the ministry of Jesus Christ unto the saving of souls and the building of thy Kingdom.

With the support of the Holy Spirit, may both pastor and people work together in a bond of unity serving thee with gladness and rejoicing in the op portunities accorded them through this church may they deal justly, love mercy and walk humbly with thee, the God of their salvation, and with the Christ who is way, truth and life for those who love peace and desire to establish the kingdom of love upon earth. Amen. — *A. George Reinelt, Baptist Church, Franklin, New Hampshire.*

Being "All Shook Up"

By John S. Wood

I'm in love.
I'm all shook up.
I'm in love.
Hmnn, Yeah.[1]

YOU MAY find out anyway, so I might as well admit it. I'm a rather incorrigible mystery tory fan. Some folk go for romantic novels, others eem to thrive on science fiction, but when I want o read for fun, for kicks, for just plain change rom the kind of reading I'm normally involved n, give me an Agatha Christie any time.

Knowing this weakness of mine, you can appreciate the problem television poses for me on the Saturdays that I'm able to watch it. For there, overlapping, are the two Perry shows — Como and Mason. Choosing between two goods, or two evils f that's your point of view, is always a difficult hing. When the family is around, they usually veight the balance toward the relaxing entertainment of the Como show. Left to my own, I'll more han likely choose the excitement of Erle Stanley Gardner every time.

One thing I've learned from all this mystery tory business is that the whole case depends on he witnesses: on what they have seen or not seen, on what they know or do not know, on what they are able or unable to testify to on the basis of heir own personal experience.

Even though I'm familiar enough with the routine to know the outcome in advance, I'm still ible to enjoy the way in which Mr. Mason takes Mr. Berger's witnesses and makes them admit hings that finally have them testifying for the defense instead of against it as they had originally ntended. Maybe I enjoy it because that's what vitnesses are really supposed to do.

And He said to them ". . . you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth."

The crowds had followed him everywhere and news of his movements went before him to each village along the road. And the people's hearts were filled with joy if he should pass their way or stop and sup or give one of his wonderful discourses on the nature of the coming Kingdom.

Why shouldn't they rejoice? Was not this he who healed the sick and raised the dead? Was not this he who taught of love and peace? Was not this he who promised them the "fullness of life"?

Imagine then the impact of words such as we find in the tenth chapter of Matthew. The crowd must have been shocked and repelled by them even as we find them so difficult that we would rather skip this chapter than risk applying it to our lives.

Risk and Sacrifice

Not peace — but the sword! Man against father! Daughter against mother! True, that's the way life is often lived. We know enough history to appreciate how man's dream for peace has long been unfulfilled while the sword of war has again and again sought his allegiance. And we know enough about family life in general and our own families in particular to appreciate the many minor and major ways in which a man may be set against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. We can accept all this as insightful of the way life is, but we hardly expect the Master to be holding it up as a standard of life as it should be or as he would have it be for those who follow him.

Probably one reason we have such difficulty with this passage is that we are all so much the product of a "comfortable Christianity," a faith which has been handed to us and never particularly made any demands upon us. Neither we nor our fathers and mothers have ever had to risk any great sacrifice for our faith. Unlike the Roman world, the Moslem world, the Shinto world where

[1] Otis Blackwell and Elvis Presley, "All Shook Up," Shalimar Music Corporation, 1957.

JOHN S. WOOD, *associate executive director of the Department of Youth Work and associate executive secretary of the United Christian Youth Movement of the National Council of Churches here presents the third installment in his series to youth and their problems.*

to become a Christian is to break with home and family and community and even nation, our society does not forbid our being Christian or threaten to punish us for the normal practice of our religion; in fact it encourages it — encourages it because the "normal" practice of a "comfortable Christianity" is just about the best insurance policy any society could have.

It has been said before and in many ways, but listen to the thought as it finds itself expressed in a contemporary novel:

> I kid Jim Foster about this sometimes. I told him the other day — you know he comes from an old line, Fall River, Mass., Republican, Presbyterian family — I said, "Jim, you boys in Bus. Ad. School should, as a matter of sound business practice, have a course in church administration." He looked at me with surprise and said, "Why do you have such a crazy idea as that?" Then I told him it wasn't crazy. "Do you realize, Mr. Foster, that your existence as a professional business man literally depends on whether the Christian churches continue in their present happy condition of ineffectiveness? So long as nothing happens to change the churches you boys are safe. But if something happens to shake them from their lethargy — to force them to start preaching the Gospel again, and as a result, people start discovering that they are not something to be smeared across a billboard by an advertising agency then you are in trouble, and I mean serious trouble. Your biggest enemy, Jim," I said, "is not the communist; it's the human being that has suddenly discovered that he is not a vegetable, nor a consumer of catsup and soap, nor a statistic, but instead a creature with spiritual dimensions. Once this creature discovers who he is, your powerful advertising tricks will disintegrate over night, and when this happens your neat and heavily subsidized business organization will be forced to get its face lifted, and right speedily."[2]

And it's not only in the realm of business, or labor that such would be the case. There are politics and international affairs. There are human relations and community affairs. There is the whole realm of man's learning to live with man wherever he finds him; which is, of course, the root and heart of all religion and the most difficult possible challenge. "But he who loves not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love either brother or father whom he hath not seen?"

We are all quite aware of how difficult it is to get along with some people. They are a thorn in our flesh and a burden to our patience and goodwill. But I wonder how able we are to recognize the ways in which we can be difficult as well. I mean in no wise to belittle the majesty and mystery of the crucifixion. But I would like to suggest that it may well be that some of us, sometimes, are the crosses other people have to bear.

Parents, teachers, friends willing to accept the sacrifice of love even when we are unloving and unlovable; associates in class or team or club willing to bear with our annoying immaturities or selfish demands for attention or the center of the stage; a loved one, a marriage partner, willing in love to take us as we are and, for better or wor risk living with us the rest of their lives.

Others bear with us all the time. It may ju be that the cross we are asked to bear is to g along with the difficult, the unaccepted, the ou cast, and yes, even the enemy. I'm not saying th lightly. Getting along with the Russians is easy task but, under God, it is a cross we cann in sanity ignore. Learning to live in harmony a society made up of many different peoples several races and tongues and cultures may requi such great readjustments we would rather avo the issue and yet, before God, we know the cu will not pass till we drink it.

Unavoidable Choice

"The cross" says George Buttrick, "is a se denial comfortable people choose to evade."[3] may be, Jesus insists, that there come in our liv instances when to choose between right and wron to choose between Christ and the way things ar to choose between the way of love and the wa of the world, may set son against father and daug ter against mother. It is not a choice lightly to b made. Nor is it one to be avoided, for he wh loves any of these more than Me and does not tak up his cross and follow me is not worthy of m

Last time we talked about faith. We said was an attitude of trust, of surrender, of captu by the love of God which demands and can sett for nothing less than a total response in lov There are those who were happy with what I sai then, who will not be as happy with what I hav been saying now. There are those who are willin to accept the love and grace of God and make response — of sorts. There are those who glad sing the old refrain: "Take my life and let it be.

But you see, it cannot end there. Because o our faith the spirit of God may descend upon u with power, but as long as we have our transmi sions locked in neutral, that power isn't doing an good and we're not going anywhere except mayb downhill.

The power descends upon us for a purpos Not for our purpose, mind you, that we should b strengthened for doing more of the things we wan or like to do. But God's purpose — "that ye sha be my witness to the end of the earth" and tha may imply doing some things we don't want to d may not like to do or may find quite costly to do That may imply, you see, a cross.

That is what is so upsetting about Christianity It talks about things like crosses and not peace bu a sword and man against father and race relation and economic practices and international affai and all the rest. If it would only mind its ow business and talk about faith and peace an promises.

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[2] William N. Hawley, *The Table* (unpublished copyrighted manuscript, 1957). Used by permission.

[3] George Buttrick, *The Interpreter's Bible*, Volume VII (Nashvill Abingdon Press).

But what is religion save a way of life. A way of living where you are among people with human problems and shortcomings and amidst all the realms of society — business, politics, world order.

We may wish it otherwise, but the religion we say we share in is a religion for those who would "turn the world upside down." We may long for ease and escape from the hard choices but we hear those words: "He who would save his life shall lose it." We may be tempted to compromise our knowledge of truth and error, of right and wrong in order to avoid the consequences of being a witness for that in which we say we believe, but before us ever is that vision painted in Jesus' unforgettable words of condemnation: "white sepulchres, neither hot nor cold, fit only to be spewed out of the mouth."

To quote George Buttrick again, we know that "his doctrine is either true or untrue, his cross is either a pathetic and ironic tragedy or a very redemption. Neutrality is not possible; we are either for him or against him, and between the two camps there is inevitable clash."[4] Not peace, but the sword.

Say what you will about the values or effects of Rock and Roll. In some measure, at least, it speaks the truth more clearly than much of our polite hymn singing. For, for those who sense themselves to be captured by the love of God and under mandate of the cross, "Just As I Am" is not nearly so expressive an affirmation of faith as is: "I'm in love, I'm all shook up." In love with God and shook up out of my normal way of life. Loved by God and shook up in seeking to make a total response to that love. All shook up by a love "so amazing, so divine" that it demands "my life, my love, my all."

Free Pulpit?

(Continued from page 8)

him that he was going to be in serious trouble because of that utterance. They gave it as their professional opinion that on the morrow he would be sued. Then they walked out of the church and left the young preacher shivering with apprehension. In a few minutes, however, they returned — all five of them. Their spokesman said: "Tucker, we want you to know that we think you are in trouble. Yes, terrible trouble. But we also want you to know that we will defend you!" And to this day I preach from a free pulpit because there are still laymen who honor this sacred compact.

There is one thing more to be said. It is most essential. The pulpit is free only by the grace of God. The preacher experiences an existential moment when he takes his place in the pulpit. On his human side, and understanding the nature of the gospel he is about to proclaim, he knows that he stands absolutely alone. And yet he is not alone, for he stands in the presence of God. Trembling in every limb he knows at that moment that "it is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God." He is under the absolute necessity of beseeching God for the outpouring of his grace. In that moment, if he truly preaches, a divine metamorphosis occurs. What he has prepared by the sweat of his brow, becomes something other than his own. His words bear the awful weight of the Word of God. Then he knows what Paul meant when he said: "For if I preach the gospel, that gives me no ground for boasting. *For necessity is laid upon me.* Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!" And still from across the centuries come the words: "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." Since that truth is really Jesus Christ, he knows what makes and keeps his pulpit free.

[4] Ibid.

God's Pursuit

(Continued from page 5)

morally, but should be made aware of his restlessness and his fear of encountering God. The man who is under the bondage of work should not boast of being superior to him. But neither should he boast of his work to those who are in the bondage of work.

V

There are many in our time who have experienced the limits of both ways, for whom successful work has become as meaningless as plunging into the abundance of life. I am speaking of the skeptics and cynics, of those in anxiety and despair, of those who for a moment in their lives have been stopped in their flight from God and then continued it — though in a new form, in the form of consciously questioning or denying him. Their attitude is very much described and analyzed in our period by literature and the arts. And somehow this is justified. If they are serious skeptics, their seriousness and the suffering following from it justifies them. If they are desperately in despair, the hell of their serious despair makes them into symbols for the understanding of our own situation.

But they also are in the flight from God. God has hit them, but they do not recognize him. Their need to deny him in thought and attitude shows that they have been arrested in their flight for a moment. If they were satisfied with the success

of work or with the abundance of life, they would not have become "accusers of being." They accuse being because they flee from the power which gives being to every being.

VI

All this cannot be said of the last group of those who are in the flight from God. They do not flee away from the cross as did the disciples. They flee towards it. They watch it and witness to it; they are edified by it. They are better than the disciples! But are they really? If the cross has become a tenet of our religious heritage, of parental and denominational tradition, is it then still the cross of the Christ, the decisive point in which the eternal cuts into the temporal? But perhaps it is not paternal tradition which keeps us near the cross; perhaps it is a sudden emotional experience, a conversion under the impact of a powerful preacher or evangelist that has brought us for the first time face to face with the cross! Even then, in the height of our emotion we should ask, is not our bow to the cross the safest form of our flight from the cross?

VII

But whatever may be the way of our flight from God, we can be arrested. And if this happens something cuts into the regular processes of our life. It is a difficult but also a great experience! One may be thrown out of work and think that now the meaning of life is gone. One may suddenly feel the emptiness of what seemed to be an abundant life. One may become aware that one's cynicism is not serious despair but hidden arrogance. One may see in the midst of a devotional act that one has exchanged God for one's religious feelings. All this is painful like the cutting of a knife. But it is also great because it opens up in us a new dimension of life. God has arrested us and something new gets hold of us.

This new reality which appears in us does not remove the old realities but it transforms them by giving them a new dimension. We still are working; and work remains hard and full of anxiety and as before takes the largest part of our day! But it does not give us the meaning of our life. The strength or the opportunity to work may be taken from us, but not the meaning of our life. We realize that work cannot provide it and work cannot take it from us. For the meaning of work itself has become something else. In working we help to make real the infinite possibilities which lie hidden in life. We cooperate with life's self-creating powers, whether in the smallest or in the largest work. Through us as workers, something of the inexhaustible depth of life becomes manifest. This is what one can feel, at least in some moments, if one is arrested by God. Work points beyond itself. And because it does so, it becomes blessed, and we become blessed through it. For blessedness means fulfillment in the ultimate dimension of our bein

And if someone is arrested by experiencing th profound emptiness of the abundant life, the abu dance itself is not taken from him; it may still gi great moments of ecstacy and joy. But it does n give him the meaning of his life. The external o portunities or the inner readiness to experien the ecstasies of life may vanish, but not the mea ing of his life. He realizes that abundance cann give it and want cannot take it away. For th abundance of life has become something new f him who is arrested by God. It has become manifestation of the creative love which reunite what it separates, which gives and takes, whic elevates us above ourselves and shows us that w are finite and must receive everything, whic makes us love life and penetrate through ever thing that is to its eternal ground.

And if someone is arrested by God and mad aware of the lack of seriousness of his doubt and h despair, the doubt is not taken away from him an the despair does not cease to be a threat. But h doubt does not need to lead into despair. It do not need to deprive him of the meaning of his lif Doubt cannot give it to him — as he secretly b lieved in his cynical arrogance — and doubt canno take it from him as he felt in his despair. For doub has become something else for him who is arreste by God. It has become a means for penetrating th depth of his being and into the depth of all being Doubt has ceased to be intellectual play or a meth od of research. It has become a courageous under cutting of all the untested assumptions on whic our lives are built. They break down one after th other and we come deeper and nearer to the groun of our life. And then it happens that those who liv in serious doubt about themselves and their world find that there is opened the dimension whic leads to the ultimate by which they had bee arrested. And they realize that in the seriousness o their doubt was hidden the truth.

And if someone is arrested by God and made aware of the ambiguous character of his religious life, religion is not taken away from him. But now he realizes that even this cannot give him the mean ing of his life. He does not need to lose the mean ing of his life if he loses his religion. Whoever is arrested by God stands beyond religion and non religion. And if he holds fast to his religion, it has become something else to him. It has become a channel, but not a law, another way in which the presence of the ultimate has arrested him, but not the only way. Since he has reached freedom *from* religion he also has reached freedom *for* religion. He is blessed in it and he is blessed outside of it. He has been opened for the ultimate dimension of being.

Therefore, do not flee, let yourself be arrested and be blessed!

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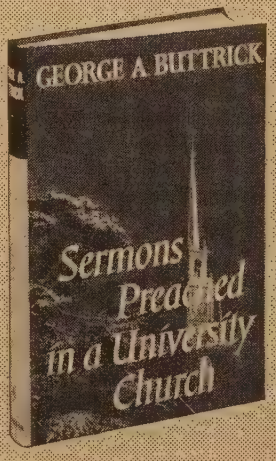

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Dr. Buttrick, for 28 years pastor of Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, is at present Preacher to the University and Plummer Professor of Christian Morals at Harvard University, where these sermons were delivered. In addition to these other positions, he served as editor in chief of the Editorial Board of *The Interpreter's Bible.*

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"The Christ Business"

By John Loose

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in every one. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are inspired by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills. I Corinthians 12:4-11.

AS WE all know, this passage from I Corinthians follows a short preface in which Paul attempts to explain that the Spirit of God is responsible for two alternative human responses to Jesus Christ. It is quite clear, I think, that Paul wanted the church at Corinth to understand that "no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says 'Jesus be cursed!' and no one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit." That is to say, both the Yes of acceptance and the No of rejection are intimately related to the working of the Holy Spirit in the temporal realm of human existence.

To be sure, it does seem as if Paul is telling us that the Spirit moves some men to say that "Jesus is Lord," and it is equally apparent that he wants us to believe that only if the Spirit has not been the basis for human utterance can one say "Jesus be cursed!" One obvious conclusion is, of course, that Paul is articulating a doctrine which affirms that some are chosen by the Spirit to glorify Jesus Christ and others are predestined to curse Jesus Christ because they have not been given the power by the Holy Spirit to recognize that Jesus is Lord. In any event, these words from I Corinthians suggest that Paul was aware of two possible relations to Jesus Christ which were of tremendous import in his own time. Moreover, he goes so far as to say that men were to be identified by their confessing that Jesus is Lord or by their cursing him. For the informed Corinthian Christian then, the working of the Holy Spirit in human hearts resulted in either an affirmation of the Lordship of Jesus Christ or an absolute rejection of the Son of God; and for Paul, at least, there were no other alternatives.

For those of us who are aware that we are living in the 20th century, it may very well be true that there are other alternatives which Paul did not see fit to take into account. Furthermore, Paul's tendencies toward reductionism and oversimplification appear to be somewhat anachronistic in our sophisticated theological world with its emphasis upon complexity and ambiguity. Even so, I do not think that we are as yet totally indifferent to Paul's understanding of Christology and its possible significance for modern life. But what may come as a surprise to us are the peculiar nooks and crannies of our culture in which Christology continues to be, in good theological jargon, an "ultimate concern."

As a matter of fact, we need only to read Nathanael West's novel, *Miss Lonelyhearts,* in order to be struck by a sincere, if somewhat frantic, effort to make some sense of the "Christ dream." And J. D. Salinger's story of *The Catcher in the Rye* is no exception as we hear the adolescent spirit of Holden Caulfield commenting upon the Christmas celebration at Radio City and remarking that Jesus probably would be nauseated if he could see it.

But it is not, I suppose, a very sound policy for the church to seek self-understanding of its own heritage from sources which openly purport to stand outside and, in some cases, against the institutional forms which constitute the church in our culture. For this very reason it may be the better part of wisdom to examine the way or ways in which the church is attempting to proclaim and articulate the Christian faith. An analysis of theological thinking in the life of the contemporary church suggests to us that there are at least three dominant perspectives which are delineating a rationale for the Christological controversy in our own day. This is not to say that there are no other theological viewpoints which are operative in contemporary theology; rather what is meant here is that all the particular versions of the Christological problem would fit, more or less, within the typologies which we will now give our attention.

Christocentric

There is, first of all, a large group of Christians who give expression to their faith from a specifically Christocentric theological viewpoint. By this I mean that we are immediately aware of an insistence upon the statement that man's relation to God is dependent entirely and absolutely upon man's relation to Jesus Christ. It is usually true that the form of the proclamation of the gospel which is most prevalent among those who cling to this position tends to involve a complete identity of the reality of Jesus Christ with the forms of expression used in familiar versions of the Bible, notably the King James Version. In this respect, the language of the Bible and the content of the gospel are inseparable, and for these Christians, at least, the meaning of the gospel is practically self-evident.

From this perspective, there is no other starting point for the Christian faith except Christology, since all other viewpoints are considered to be provincial and altogether inadequate for dealing with the "once-and-for-all" revelation of God in Jesus Christ. Thus the writer of the Epistle of I John says all that needs to be said: "He is the expiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but for all the world." In the final analysis, one suspects that a Christological affirmation is equivalent to the Christian faith, and that nothing else is either necessary or possible.

Even though we are often tempted

JOHN LOOSE *graduated from Gettysburg College in 1951 and Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg in 1954. A member of the United Lutheran Church, he is at present a graduate student in the department of religion and art of the Divinity School at the University of Chicago.*

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to identify the Christocentric position principally with literalists and fundamentalists of all sorts, it is probably true that when the chips are down the ranks of those who really adhere to this viewpoint would be uncomfortably overcrowded. And for those Christians who are attempting to take biblical scholarship seriously, there is just cause for speculating as to whether or not the labor of numerous scholars during the past century has made any deep impression upon the life and faith of the church. Needless to say, there does seem to be ample evidence that these scholars have labored in vain. Furthermore, a close analysis of contemporary sermons leaves us with the impression that the proclamation of the gospel continues to make its final appeal by utilizing traditional terminology with a thin covering of psychological concepts and a "positive-thinking" philosophy of life. You will pardon me, therefore, if I think it is not unjust for us to conclude that the church is still dominated by Unitarians of the Second Person who have reduced the Christian faith to Christology, which is, at best, a very narrow and impoverished version of what was once a deep and profound doctrine.

Tension

If the Christocentric perspective upon the Christian faith tends to give divine status to biblical statements about the human existence of Jesus Christ insofar as form and content are inseparable, there is a second position which argues that the Christian faith and our understanding of the modern world exist in a relationship of "tension." It is obvious that most of the intellectuals in the church find this viewpoint quite useful an rather desirable for dealing with th problems of faith and modern cultur Here we find a self-conscious recogn tion of the richness and plenitud of the biblical language and traditio al doctrinal statements, and an awar ness that some of this language utterly meaningless in our time. Bu at the same time, there is also a acute sensitivity to hermeneutic problems and the findings of historic criticism as these are brought to be upon the exegesis and interpretatic of the Bible. That is to say, th contemporary problem of "demytho ogizing" is given serious attention an the question which is of importan to this particular Christian camp just how far the Christian can g in the process of separating the "core of the gospel from the mythologic forms in which it was originally e pressed. Although there is a wid range of disagreement at this poin there seems to be a general convictio that there is an aspect of the gosp which cannot be exhaustively inte preted by any particular or even a methods. The Bible is still, somehow the Word of God which transcend all approaches to its explication.

Now it is certainly true that th so-called "tension" theologians are t be given their proper due insofa as they are attempting to deal ade quately with both the Christian trad tion and modern man's understandin of himself and the world in whic he lives. Nor can we doubt that thos who take this viewpoint are not some what uneasy about what seems t be a very sophisticated method o speaking out of both sides of one' mouth at the same time. In view o the complexities of the problem, w do well to extend our sympathies i the direction of this position and t admit that we are all susceptible t the attraction which accompanies thi understanding of how the demand of faith and culture are to be met But it is equally apparent that thi perspective is not an answer, and i constitutes a noble effort to have one' cake and eat it too. Thus, we mus insist that this position is usually onl the arrival at a state of chronic open mindedness, that fascinating condition of informed indecision. Once more if we may appeal to Paul, we must reiterate that the Christian faith ap pears to require a fundamental decision.

Theocentric

Finally, there is a viewpoint emerg ing within the Christian church which is seeking to press for a "theocentric" interpretation of the Christian faith. This involves the understanding that man's relation to God is dependent upon the working of the Spirit of God which is immanent in all of life, and only incidentally upon man's relation to Christ. In other words, this position affirms that the "Christ event" has a unique historical value insofar as he is the originative event

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f the institution of the Christian hurch and its distinctive Word and acraments. But what is being questioned is whether Jesus Christ actually as any existential value which is redominantly effective in modern fe. It appears to be true that the ower of the "Christ event" is no onger central to our understanding f human existence, nor is it so allervasive in our culture as our knowldge of history up to the modern eriod would seem to indicate was nce the case. Moreover, what is even nore problematical is whether or not he early church, and principally the auline Epistles, are quite so Christoentric as we have been led to believe.

There is no denying that this perpective will entail certain implicaions for the church's understanding nd proclamation of its faith. Similarly, the study of theology will be proundly affected by this attempt to elease the faith from the tenacious grasp of reductive adherents to a poverty-stricken Christological doctrine. In the first place, we shall witness an emerging emphasis upon an adequate explication of the doctrine of Creation which will stress once again the holiness of all of life as stemming from the goodness of God's creative activity. Perhaps a revival of this profound Christian doctrine will permit us to understand that the popular and pragmatic distinctions between the sacred and the secular are, by and large, really false and superficial. Hence, we should not be astonished by the development of a natural theology as the basis for our affirming explicitly that the possibility of living abundantly, i.e., the Christian life of faith, is everywhere always present and that it has been and is being actualized apart from any necessarily direct relation to Jesus Christ.

Providence

In a similar fashion, the Christian community will begin to explore a more adequate understanding and formulation of a doctrine of God. For we need to recognize the necessity of the Christian affirmation of a God who provides particular providence for each and every individual, for one and all of his creatures. Naturally, this will entail a concern for the value of the religious life of all God's creatures as they contribute to the human community, the natural world, and the life of God. At this juncture, we can ascertain that the church will no longer devote itself primarily and exclusively to engendering a commitment to what we are now beginning to suspect is a "dated" revelation. On the contrary, the church will have its eyes open to the manifestations of the Holy Spirit as it has been working ceaselessly to break the stigma of what is often scarcely more than downright idolatry, that is, the theological viewpoint exemplified by Unitarians of the Second Person.

Finally, we shall share with a rejoicing Christian community a renewed celebration of the Spirit of God who proffers to us at all times and in all places the gift of faith. It is high time that we join with Paul in acknowledging that "It is the Spirit who gives the gifts. All these are inspired by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he will. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body — Jews or Greeks, slaves or free — and all were made to drink of one Spirit." Most assuredly, it is quite ironical that because of our idolatry, our hearts have been hardened and we have neither the eyes to see nor the ears to hear.

In spite of the church's excessive attention to Christology, the time may now be upon us, as Paul puts it, "when all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things under him, that God may be everything to everyone." I take it this would mean that the church, the Kingdom of God, is precisely that community in which the Spirit of God gives to each one of us the gifts whereby God is enabled to become everything to everyone. It seems as if the church has been a long time learning that "if it is true that we live by the Spirit, then let us also walk by the Spirit."

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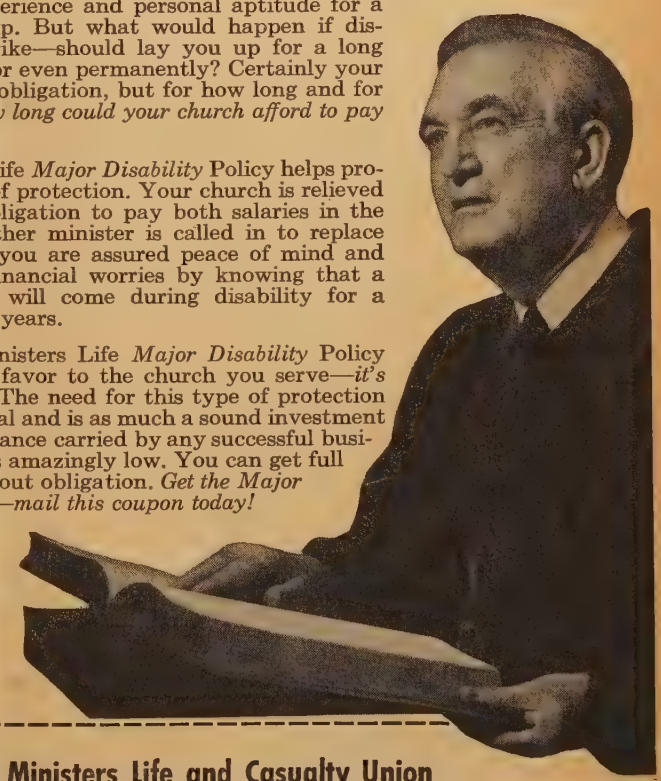

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Seeking and Finding God. *By Roy Pearson. Abingdon. $2.00.*

Prayers of the Reformers. *Compiled by Clyde Manschreck. Muhlenberg. $2.50.*

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Existence Under God. *By Albert Edward Day. Abingdon. $2.50.*

Prayers in the Market Place. *By John W. Harms. Bethany. $1.75.*

All Things Are Possible Through Prayer. *By Charles L. Allen. Fleming H. Revell. $2.00.*

Sermon Seeds from the Gospels. *By Webb B. Garrison. Fleming H. Revell. $1.95.*

THESE seven short volumes will be found of special value to the hard-pressed parson. They will provide him with no new ideas, but with many fresh approaches to the common problems of personal prayer. The last of the seven should keep him well-supplied with sermon outlines for a normal ministry of thirty years. Do clergymen actually depend on prefabricated sermon-starters, by and large, in the American pulpit? The thought is a bit ghastly, but may be true. Farmers feed chickens egg-starters, and the last of these seven slight books should help the feeble mind that has no ideas of its own. The other volumes have real merit for pulpit use — again for men too busy attending committees and clubs to prepare a prayer of their own. Olive Wyon and Albert Edward Day present heavier fare, but you feel yourself back in the 19th century with both, though their pietism (the first English, the second American) has some serious reaching out to the quickened social conscience. Allen is warm and human. Pearson, on the whole, manages to present in forty devotions for any time of year some clear and relevant material, offering no escape to other-worldliness — rather, new life on earth. — *David Wesley Soper, Beloit College, Beloit, Wisconsin.*

Letters to the Seven Churches. *By William Barclay. Abingdon. $2.00.*

The Seven Letters. *By Hugh Martin. Westminster. $2.25.*

The Book of Revelation: A Commentary for Laymen. *By Thomas S. Kepler. Oxford University Press. $4.50.*

THERE is an increasing interest in the Book of Revelation, partly evidenced by these three books. Because of the abuses made by some in their interpretations, and because of the difficulties and often impossibility of forming an interpretation of our own, a good many of us tend to leav the book alone. Much more nee to be said before we will be ab to explain the present attraction the Book of Revelation at the ver time in which there is uncertaint about the mission of the church, an in the midst of a great many questio about the relevancy of the church message.

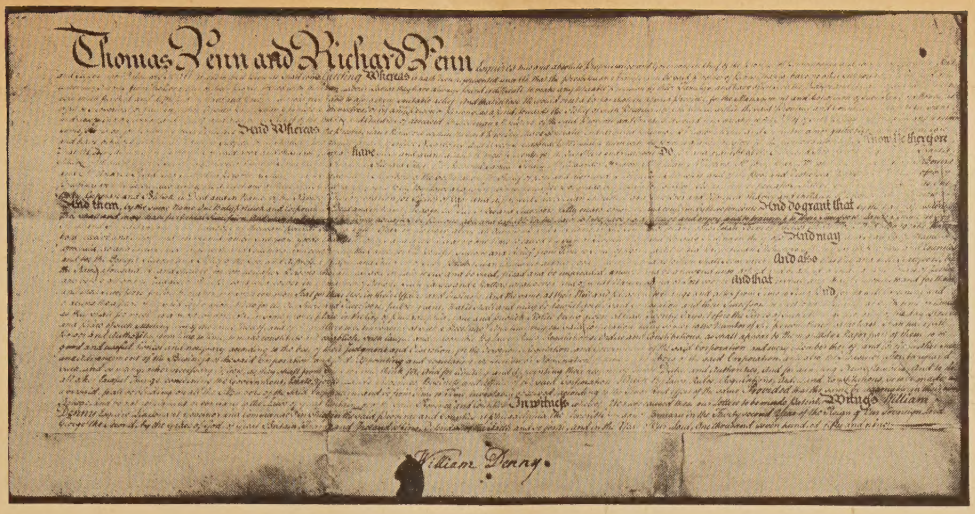
These three commentaries are hel ful in seeking to present the messag of the book over against the historica and intellectual background out which the book was written. Th authors make use of the best technica commentaries available, such as thos written by R. H. Charles, James Mo fatt and Martin Kiddle. They them selves write in a more popular styl

William Barclay is a minister the Church of Scotland and bring together in the *Letters to the Seve Churches* articles which appeare originally in the *British Weekly*. H deals only with chapters two an three of the Book of Revelation. Hi main reason for doing this is tha in the midst of a very difficult book at least this one section is clear an relevant. Dr. Barclay devotes tw chapters to each of the seven churche mentioned in this section. The mor helpful chapter is the one dealing with the historical setting which co ers such aspects as the cultural, polit ical and religious life of each city Because of the obvious similarities i certain areas of life at that time some of the local distinctions appear somewhat arbitrary.

The other chapter on each church is a verse by verse exposition of the text. Several of his illustrations come close to being trite fillers and rather far removed from our own times. On the whole, however, he does attempt to clarify the more difficult phrases and tie them in with the main theme of each message.

In *The Seven Letters* Hugh Martin also concentrates on the messages to the seven churches. He is a British minister best known as an author and for his work with the Student Christian Movement. For a number of years he was editor of the SCM Press. What he has to say about these seven letters is placed in a somewhat stronger position by including in his commentary a treatment of the first chapter of the Book of Revelation.

Dr. Martin discusses the problem of the identity of "John" and the specific circumstances under which the book was written. He also gives some explanation for the present obscurities. The dominant theme of the book is presented as the "challenge of Emperor worship to the sole Lord-



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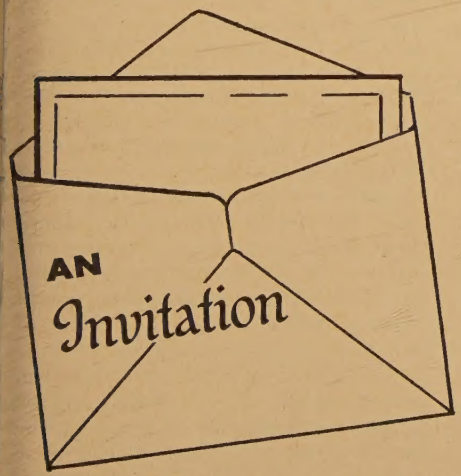

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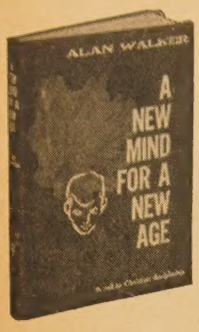

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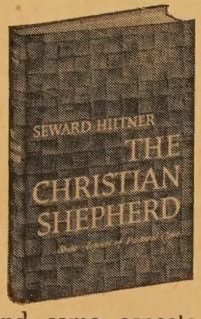

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ship of Christ." The value of the book is enhanced by this solid introduction.

The second portion of the book deals with the seven letters themselves. He concentrates on the exposition of the text rather than a word by word exegesis. His sane presentation, written in popular rather than technical style, is very helpful. Some attempt is made to relate the message of these letters to our present day.

Thomas S. Kepler, professor of New Testament language and literature, Graduate School of Theology, Oberlin College, has written his commentary, *The Book of Revelation,* based on the text of the Revised Standard Version. The first forty pages discuss problems which relate to date, authorship, text, characteristics of apocalyptic writings and ways to interpret the Book of Revelation. This is a very concise helpful section.

The rest of the book deals with commentary on the text taking two or three verses at a time. Some explanation of the symbolism is given based on the secular as well as the biblical usage. Frequent references are given to word or symbol found in other parts of the Bible. The reader is often given a choice of two or three interpretations. This is a book that can be used by laymen and would serve as a good beginning for a pastor. — *Robert B. Hayward, Fourth Presbyterian Church, Chicago, Illinois.*

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THE TORCH OF FAITH. *By Freda Dunlop White. John C. Winston. $4.50.*

MEN OF TOMORROW. *By Ewald Mand. Westminster. $3.00.*

SAMARIA and *Babylon* are volumes seven and eight in "Studies in Biblical Archaeology." André Parrot, the author, is Curator-in-Chief of the French National Museums, professor at the Ecole du Louvre and an eminent archaeologist. He gives all the facts available from the biblical accounts, archaeological findings and other sources concerning the two cities. Samaria was important as the capital of Israel for two centuries and after a decline, had a fresh period of brilliance shortly before the beginning of the Christian era. The author details reasons for the belief that the body of John the Baptist was buried there. He gives the cultural context of the long history of Babylonia with particular reference to those elements relevant to the Old Testament. The material in both volumes is compact, even compressed, with an abundance of plates and figures for elucidation.

The late Paul Ilton, author of *Bible Was My Treasure Map,* wa foreign correspondent in the N East by profession and an archaeol cal adventurer by avocation. Foll ing hunches from the Bible intuition, he unearthed a number treasures from the past which h been exhibited all over the wo including a display at New Yo Metropolitan Museum of Art. haps the marble head he found not of Salome, perhaps the gol locust is not sufficient to conf Canaanite insect worship, perhaps other findings are not revolution but that hardly matters in this fi class adventure story. All of the gredients of earthquake, impris ment in an ancient tomb, the wr of a hostile village, are present al with the excitement of pursuit a discovery. The reader's knowledge the past is not greatly increased he at least wishes he could be archaeologist of the same sort a not just the type who works w after week, year after year, at so crumbling ruins, with only a few facts to reveal.

The Torch of Faith and *Men Tomorrow* are designed to make Bible interesting to young peop Freda Dunlop White spends the fi of fifteen chapters relating Abraha background in the city of Ur. S utilizes Jewish "haggadoth" and chaeological findings as a point of parture for her conjecture th Abraham lived in a good resident district, on a palm-shaded street, a two-story brick house plastered a whitewashed inside and out and bu around a courtyard. We are told th there was a bakeshop around t corner and that Abraham liked go to the library and museum, th he read the Gilgamesh epic with story of the flood. In the seco chapter we are told of the incide in the idol shop and that Abraha carried a copy of the Code of Ha murabi with him on his trek to Pal tine as well as a library of scienc art, history, mathematics and astro omy. After the reader reaches t New Testament he learns that Pet and his faithful wife traveled widel preaching and establishing church With so much conjecture and so mu extra-biblical material, surely a youth or adult reading this bo would be left in a state of utt confusion if he thought it really bib cal. On the positive side, eightee new Hammond maps are appende Ewald Mand, the distinguished Est nian novelist and Baptist minister no serving in the United States, has n departed as much from biblical co tent. The reader is given not on the thoughts but the feelings of th important figures as they participate in the biblical drama. Much of th book is in dialogue form which ad color, even though the introductio of nonbiblical personages adds to th confusion of the person who wan

learn of the Bible. The simple aps and other text illustrations by ohn Lear are good. In neither book there any reference to biblical crit-ism. The authors have simply hosen what they liked and let their naginations run riot. — *Lee A. Bel-ord, New York University, New York ity.*

HANDBOOK OF CHURCH MANAGEMENT. *By William H. Leach. Prentice-Hall. $8.00.*

DR. LEACH seems well on his way toward producing a five-oot shelf of books. This latest edition ncorporates some of the materials hat went into his earlier works on hurch finance and publicity, church dministration, manuals for marriage nd funerals, money-raising for hurches, and religious building. This andbook is a veritable encyclopedia f the administrative aspects of hurch life, a one-volume piece of quipment for the 'pastoral director.' f course, as with all encyclopedias, ne man's necessity is another's irrele-ance and so literally dozens of pages nay seem beside the point, to certain hurch administrators and pastors. et, to labor the obvious is not always armful; a checklist of the taken-for-ranted can be helpful to new lay ersonnel approaching various aspects f church management. Leach com-ensates also by including a consider-ble amount of fresh material which s nowhere else so easily available. urchase of this one volume should ake it possible to clear ten or twelve nches on any minister's bookshelves f works which it renders obsolete or edundant. — *M.E.M.*

Pulpit Calendar

Apr. 5 — 1st Sunday after Easter.
Apr. 12 — 2nd Sunday after Easter. National Christian College Day.
Apr. 19 — 3rd Sunday after Easter.
Apr. 26 — 4th Sunday after Easter.
May 3 — Rural Life Sunday.
May 3-10 — National Family Week.
May 7 — Ascension Day.
May 10 — Festival of the Christian Home. (Mother's Day).
May 17 — Whitsunday. (Pentecost).
May 24 — Trinity Sunday.
May 30 — Memorial Day.
May 31 — 2nd Sunday after Pentecost.
June 7 — 3rd Sunday after Pentecost.
June 14 — 4th Sunday after Pentecost.
June 21 — 5th Sunday after Pentecost.
June 28 — Independence Sunday. Nature Sunday.

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